

London, 25th April.
The Sicilian police have discovered a remarkable谋杀案 (murder) club, the *Palermo*, consisting of 59 members, pledged to murder for common advantage and profit. The members undertake to execute private vengeance for hire. A branch club, consisting of 45 members, has been organised at Bisicchia within a few months. The latter club has killed 30 persons. The members of both clubs are imprisoned at Palermo, and will be tried in May.

New York, 25th April.

A cable special of the 24th says:—Vernon Harcourt, husband of the daughter of John Lothrop Motley, the American historian, was to-day placed in quite an embarrassing position before the public through a political scandal pitched to judgment in a court of law against him. A suit was docketed against him for certain financial expenses which have not been paid, and which Harcourt and his wife paid by political agent.

A cablegram of the 24th says:—Power Marshall, a Parliament for County Mayo, Ireland, who read himself out of the Home Rule party February 20th by a violent speech attacking Parnell officially, came out on the side of the Government in favouring a tax on the Liberal budget. He is a son of a rich man, and appeared as a leader of political meetings in the last few weeks, and his late associates in the Home Rule ranks intimate that he has sold himself out to the Government for the promise of some office in Ireland.

BELIN, 25th April.

The proprietors of the leading steel works in Prussia, including Krupp, inform the workmen that over-production compels them to reduce the number of working hours. Some threaten to stop their work.

von Metzke is ill with catarrh of the lungs. He has obtained a long leave of absence and will return to his duties in Silesia. He retains nominal command of the staff.

COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE

WEDNESDAY, 28th May.

ON LONDON EXCHANGE.

Bank Bills, on demand	8/8	
Bank Bills, at 1 month's sight	8/8	
Bank Bills, at 2 months' sight	8/8	
Credit, at 4 months' sight	8/8	
Documentary Bills, at 4 months' sight	8/8	
ON PARIS.		
Bank Bills, on demand	4/6	
Credits, at 1 month's sight	4/7	
ON BOOMAY.	Bank, 3 days' sight	2/2
ON SWITZERLAND.	Bank, 3 days' sight	2/2
ON SWEDEN.	Bank, sight	7/1
ON FINLAND.	Bank, 30 days' sight	7/3

SHARES.

Hongkong and Shanghai Bank Shares—124 per cent premium.
Union Insurance Society Canton, Limited—
\$3 per share.

China Fire Insurance Company's Shares—
\$75 per share.

North China Insurance—The 1.425 per cent.

Yangtze River Insurance Association—The 1.41 per cent.

Chinese Insurance Company, Limited—\$100 per share.

On Tai Insurance Company, Limited—The 1.45 per share.

Commercial Insurance Office, Limited—\$85 per share.

China Fire Insurance Company's Shares—
\$345 per share.

Hongkong Fire Insurance Company's Shares—
\$345 per share.

Hongkong and Whampoa Dock Company's Shares—buyers 55 per cent premium.

Hongkong, Canton, and Macao Steamboat Co.'s Shares—\$43 per share premium.

Indochina Steam Navigation Co.'s Shares—
\$100 per share.

China and Manilla Steamship Company, Limited—
\$100 per share.

Hongkong Gas Company's Shares—\$94 per share.

Hongkong Hotel Company's Shares—\$145 per share.

China Sugar Refining Company, Limited—117 per cent premium.

China Steel Refining Company (Debentures)—
nominal.

Imperial Sugar Refining Company, Limited—\$90 per share.

Hongkong Ice Company's Shares—\$145 per share.

Hongkong and China Banking Company, Limited—
\$140 per share.

Prak and Minhae and Smelting Company—
\$100 per share.

Shanghai Tin Mining Company—\$220 per share.

Prak Sugar Cultivation Company—The 35 per share.

China's Imperial Loan of 1874—Nominal.

China's Imperial Loan of 1877—Nominal.

China's Imperial Loan of 1878—Nominal.

China's Imperial Loan of 1881—1 Premium.

HONGKONG: THURSDAY.

(From Messrs. PALLONI & Co's Business)

May 28th.

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TRACTS.

LET THE FANCIEST LILIA PLENTIS.
Oh, let the fanfair peasant's solemn show,
The trailing flag, the hollow booming gun,
Proclaim with reverent pomp a nation's woe!
Proclaim that Britain mourns her princely son!
Come, strew the springgolds flowers upon his tomb,
Bring wreaths for him who fell and worked for all.
The thread was snapped when barely 'twas the hour;
Alas! the best are oft the first to fall.

His birth was great—not greater than his heart;

Now there did foolish pride o'erfind a place;

At Christian truth, in life he played his part;

With unaffected zeal, with manly grace;

That he, who stood so high in wisdom's mould,

Did never cease to hold, unconquer'd these;

Who truly yearned for learning's precious fruit;

Ah! this the humblest peasant full well knows;

And now his mission here below complete,

The Lord has called the worker from the field;

Has bid him leave the plough of mortal host;

Long, long before the vesper bell has pealed.

W. L. C.

A WINTER RIDE IN ANDALUSIA.

Among the plants of southern climes that are strange to northern eyes, none is more singular than the prickly pear. A shrub without trunk or branches, it rises from the ground a succession of thick, fleshy, pear-shaped leaves, each springing from the shoulder of the one below it, and each so terribly armed on both sides with spines that all living creatures give it a wide berth. This variety of cactus is used in Andalusia for fences along the railways and highways. These fences are generally neglected and gappy; but the most impenetrable one I have ever seen is a hedge of it in the suburbs of Jerez, bounding the path along which the bulls are driven to their quarters at the ring on the eve of a fight. Soon after leaving Jerez fences disappear, as do pavements and road-metal of every kind; and our horses toil along a miry track, until at length a stretch of stubble-land, dotted with dwarf blue iris, tempester ride and steeed to a gallop. The sportsman of our party with ardour, but in vain, for their guns when half a dozen hounds take wing at our approach, and fly swiftly, for such large birds, over the hill before us. We pull up on a patch of ground whitened with daisies, and file off along a footpath which leads across a vine-farm to the hamestead in its midst. The path is an irregular and slippery ridge; for the stony reddish-brown soil is held away from each vine, leaving it in a deep hollow, so that all that falls during the winter may flow towards its roots. Each vine-stock is pruned down to a couple of short spurs to bear grapes, and one young shoot about four feet long to furnish the necessary foliage during the next season. But spring is at hand, and a party of about twenty labourers are drawing the earth back to the root of the vines, leaving each plant now on a little hillock. Their implement is a broad and heavy hoe, like a garden-spade, with the handle fixed at a right angle to the blade. The red, sash, short jacket, and sombrero give them a more picturesque appearance than most European field-labourers can boast. They are well-built men, indebted to their blended blood for the sturdiness of the Iberian, the bone of the Vinchot, and the sinewy frame of the Moor.

We dismount by the Moorish-looking wall with its circular wall and antique croissants. The farm-hands who received us are quite at ease with their master, and his friends are peaceful, without the least servility. The hamestead consists of whitewashed buildings with heavy tiled roofs, the largest being a wine and larder, which serves as press-house and as quarters for the labourers. Here also are deposited the implements of husbandry; and near them a pile of round mats made of reeds and grass. At the time of the vintage these are laid out in front of the buildings, and the ripe grapes are spread out on them for a few hours in the sun before being pressed. The wine-presses are square wooden platforms, on which the grapes are trodden by barefooted men. The juice thus liberated runs through into casks placed below. The trodden grapes are then piled round an iron pillar in the middle of the platform, and a rope of esparto is wound round them. A wooden lid is forced down on this mass by a screw working on the iron pillar, and the first running flow also into the casks. The liquid obtained by further pressure is kept separate; and after fermentation, its alcohol, is extracted by distillation and yields fine brandy, which is added to the first wine as required for its development and preservation.

At one end of the barn there is a depression in the floor about twenty feet square, bounded by a brick wall a foot high, the top of which is level with the rest of the floor. The roof above this slopes from all four sides, and culminates in a long narrow aperture open to the sky. The sun-sap forms a wide heart, in the middle of which is a heap of dry branches—cuttings from the vines. When the labourers return from the fields at dusk, this pile is kindled; and after supper they sit smoking and chattering or singing around the cheerful blaze which leaps up with many sparks into the cavernous chimney overhead. At bed-time each man unrolls his pallet of dried rushes, spreads it where he pleases, and goes to sleep under his brown rug.

In an adjoining barn the results of the vintage are stored. A vow of large casks, streaked with the froth of the fermenting must, contains the last's crop. It is still a sweetish and turbid liquid; but the crop of the previous year, filling another row of the casks, is drier to the taste and tolerably clear. Former crops have all been removed to the greater stores at Jerez, where, after several years of watchful care, they develop into what we recognize in England as fine sherry.

Opposite this building is the dwelling-house, the princely apartment in which is a large dark kitchen. The cooking-range is simply a brick platform having several slits in the top shaped like enormous button-holes. These are for the fuel—woods wood—and a fire can be made in each slit. Today only one is burning, and over it stands a great copper pot containing a meal for the labourers. It is the national dish—made of beans, peas, or lentils, with scraps of meat and other miscellaneous edibles, simmering in oil and strongly flavoured with garlic. This is served on trenchers of the most primitive earthenware, the shape and style of which have remained unchanged for ages. In an upper room we are served with lunch—salt fish stewed in oil; a mess of rice also very oily; but the crowning delicacy is pig's liver floating in oil and flavoured like the other dishes, with garlic. Of all these we partake in honour of Spanish hospitality; and then we enjoy the consue of quinces which follows, the good bread, the excellent goat's-milk cheese, the superlative sherry—made on the farm, reared with the utmost care, dry, soft, and absolutely clean—the perfection of wine.

One of the landmarks on our return to Jerez is a solitary tree on the top of a hill where the boundaries of four of the best wine-farms meet. One of these farms, exceeding 100 acres in area, is considered too large to be advantageously worked; the mode of cultivation and the nature of the crops favouring smaller holdings. Many of the most valuable and highly cultivated wine-farms are in the hands of capitalists residing in Jerez or other towns. They are placed in charge of intelligent overseers, and by good management, their produce has been much improved. The view from this

spot ranges northwards to the first slopes of the Sierra de Cordova, a spur of the loftier Sierra Morena; westwards along the basin of the Guadalquivir to the Bay of Cadiz; and southwards to the square, bold, rugged mountain of San Cristobal, beyond which lie Gibraltar and the Mediterranean. Within this circuit are the districts producing the finest wines of Spain. The low brown hills nearest us give shelter, properly so called; the higher land far away to the north give the delicate montillas; and the sandy soils towards the sea yield the camomile-flavoured manzanillas.

Picking our way out of the vine-lands, we take again to the more level vine-lands, saluted by larches and cedars of low degree, which guard every farmhouse. The small platforms near some of these, paved and coped with flat bricks, are threshing-floors, differing in no way from those of the time of Moses; but to-day we have no opportunity of observing whether his injunction as to muzzling is obeyed in Spain. A line of white stones, about 100 yards apart, marks a right way across the country, where no road exists. Keeping within a short distance to right or left of these, we may ride over hill and dale without being accounted trespassers; but in a few weeks the young wheat will be standing corn, which it is customary, though not obligatory, for travellers to respect. In Andalusia there is no permanent pasture, unless we may reckon as such the flat plains covered with palm-trees; a sort of ground palin, which afford sustenance to a few goats and cattle and shelter to the pretty little quails. Approaching Jerez, we come again to cactus hedges, and orange-trees with their fruit still unripe and ungathered; for the winter of 1883-84 has been severer beyond precedent in those parts, and four days of frost in December have done much damage, especially among the olive-groves, some of which have lost a fourth of their trees.—*St. James's Gazette.*

FLESH CREEPERS.

A sensation greatly beloved by old and young, learned and ignorant, is that of feeling their flesh creep. It is one of those touches of nature described by "Le vénus Will," as French admirers of Shakespeare call him. A writer who can instruct us, we reverence, and keep on our bookshelves, if we do not read him; one who can amuse us we read rapidly, but forget almost as rapidly; but one who can make our flesh creep we keep on our bookshelves, if we do not read him; one who can make our flesh creep we keep on our bookshelves, if we do not read him; and the writer are equally satisfied.

We have much pleasure in offering these few hints to professional flesh creepers, and only regret that spaces will not allow us to add more. We would only beg is return that they should adopt for their works the custom universal among connoisseurs with their music. The musician indicates to us the time in which his piece should be played, and the various degrees of softness or loudness he desires to be observed. Similarly the flesh creper ought to mark in the margin of his text what time of the day, or night is best suited for the reading of the passages, what should be read with louder and lighting outside, and what by a flicker in the firelight, and what with a corps in the house—*at all events within a few doors.*

The observation of such directions given by an experienced hand, would greatly assist them in their efforts to make the joys of flesh creeping—glads.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S POVERTY.

A good story is told of President Lincoln's impetuosity when he was first elected a member of the Illinois Legislature. He went to an old friend, and said, "Speed, I have rented a law office, and am to pay 2 dollars a month for it. I have counted up how much it will cost to fix up a desk in my office, and it will take just 17 dollars. Will you credit me for that amount?" "Oh, yes," said Speed; "but I think I can put you in a way to save those 17 dollars." "How?" "Well; my partner and I have been sleeping in the same bed for some time. He is gone now, and if you wish you can take his place." "Where's your bed?" "Upstairs." Lincoln immediately went up, and, after surveying the room and the bed, came back and remarked, "Well, Speed, I am located." Mr. Speed assured me that he, and Lincoln slept together for about four years.

EGYPTIAN BABIES.

As soon as an Egyptian child is born superstitious fears beset his path. The "evil eye" (says *Little Folks' Magazine*) may fall on him, and so is left unashed and un-dressed, and rendered as useless as possible, in the hope that this malicious power, which sinfully casing is stirred, will not harm him. Not content with leaving him unashed, the mother blackens his forehead or his cheeks with soot or clay, or even covers him with a thick black veil, in her anxiety to save him from imaginary ills; and friends, and relations coming to visit him or his parents are careful to say, "What an ugly child! Why, he is a perfect fright!" to which strange compliments the smiling father and mother listen complacently, as they know that this form of speech is adopted to doctify their anxiety. Poor deluded parents! Instead of saving their child from the "evil eye," they are giving him, for the saddest thing in this miserable superstition, is that the poor children, not yet old and out-of-the-way, before the flesh will creep.

The old black raps no longer still, and new compounds of powdered glass and cayenne pepper have to be invented. Through want of attention to this requirement, many writers who now endeavour to make out their flesh creep only succeed in drawing down the corners of our mouths. A plain murder or apportion is of little use nowadays for this purpose as a plain stool to a gourmand.

The benevolent mind, considering this, cannot but feel for the hard-working scribe who endeavours to provide us with the much-wished-for sensation, and kindness of heart prompts us to suggest to them a few words of comparatively unworked ore. We own that this benevolence has its admixture of selfishness, since we are as much interested in the result as they are.

In the first place, a lively writer should use a lively writer some time ago, which it is not hitherto had the attention it merits. It is a being perfect in all intellectual respects, but without any moral sense whatever.

There is a fine field here. A handsome and accomplished heroine, discovered carving up her mother into sausages meat, and all the time coming over the heads of a lecture on intercellular space for the British Association, would be rather "creepy." If properly worked up to, and a doctor who should use his position for the purposes of inoculating diseases, and dissecting patients alive in the interests of science would also be a startling subject for the "right pos." The doctor might carry on this little game for a long time before it was discovered, and it would be all the safer for him, as he would be entirely unconscious of there being any objection to it. Then, again, we remember that Zashchikov relates in his autobiography that he is one or two occasions found himself possessed of the power of reading other people's memories as if they were a book, descriptive to them of occurrences in their private lives which they had entirely forgotten till they were thus recalled. He relates how, being in the company of a vain-glorious young man, he suddenly became conscious of the boastful one's past history, and read off to him certain transactions connected with the "conveyance" of other people's cash, charges—which he had to confess were strictly true, and which had the effect of taking him down the desired number of pegs. Now this idea might be worked up well by the flesh creeper. Let him have somebody in possession of this power of reading other people's memories, to which he is the villain of the story, but little flourished on the area which is now occupied by Greenland. It is needless to point out what curious qualities these facts raise.

One of the landmarks on our return to Jerez is a solitary tree on the top of a hill where the boundaries of four of the best wine-farms meet. One of these farms, exceeding 100 acres in area, is considered too large to be advantageously worked; the mode of cultivation and the nature of the crops favouring smaller holdings. Many of the most valuable and highly cultivated wine-farms are in the hands of capitalists residing in Jerez or other towns.

They are placed in charge of intelligent overseers, and by good management, their produce has been much improved. The view from this

not fail to be effective. We should feel what we should feel.

Then there is a hint which might be taken from the seer Swedenborg. He describes certain emanating spirits inhabiting "the other side; who are so extremely subtle and frail that they are personally persona to other people, as regards features, tone of voice, gesture, and every other respect." What a diabolical horrore here for a flesh creeper.

Willie Collins has approached this idea in one of his tales, where a wicked Italian lady wears a warm mask fashioned after the complexion of the angelic heroine, whence comes much flesh creeping all round; but this similitude, of course, only extends to the features, and would only pass muster in the dark, with the light behind; whereas to have the mobility of life, the voice, gesture, figure, and allthorn, would be absolutely impossible.

It would be like standing

HONGKONG & TAIPEI.

AS REPORTED BY CHINERS ON THE 25TH MAY, 1884.

COTTON GOODS.

American Drills, 30 yards per piece..... \$20.00 to 10.75
American Drills, 15 lbs., per piece..... 15.00 to 8.00
Cotton Yarn, No. 20 to 24, per pound..... 38.00 to 12.00
Cotton Yarn, No. 32 to 42, per pound..... 38.00 to 12.00
Cotton Yarn, Bomby..... 37.00 to 10.75

Chalk, per piece..... 11.70 to 1.75

Dyed Smooth Shirting, per piece..... 8.60 to 2.85

Dyed Brocades Shirting, per piece..... 13.65 to 4.75

Dyed Damask Shirting, per piece..... 15.50 to 4.75

French Drills, 30 yards, per piece..... 32.35 to 12.50

French Drills, 15 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 7 lbs., per piece..... 11.55 to 3.75

Grey Shirting, 8 lbs., per piece..... 11.77 to 3.75

Grey Shirting, 10 lbs., per piece..... 12.00 to 4.00

Grey Shirting, 12 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 15 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 18 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 21 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 24 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 27 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 30 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 33 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 36 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 42 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 48 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 54 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 60 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 66 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 72 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 78 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 84 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 90 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 96 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 102 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 108 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 114 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 120 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 126 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 132 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 138 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 144 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 150 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 156 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

Grey Shirting, 162 lbs., per piece..... 12.35 to 4.25

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